YOSHI HITO, HARU NO MIYA, THE CHILD OF MODERN JAPAN.

By Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore.

YOSHI HITO, HARU NO MIYA, CROWN PRINCE OF JAPAN.

Of the children of the Emperor of Japan only one son and one daughter remain to him, Prince Haru and the Princess Hisa. Yoshi Hito, Haru no Miya celebrated his ninth birthday on August 31, 1888, and if he lives will succeed his father on the throne. Princess Hisa is three years old, but although empresses have ruled Japan in the early centuries, the line of succession passes from Prince Haru to the cousins of the Emperor.

The word Haru in the Japanese language means spring-time, and Aki, the name of the last little prince who died, means autumn, so that the imperial brothers, Prince Spring and Prince Autumn, were often spoken of together, and the play upon their names gave court poets many opportunities to turn graceful verses to them. Prince Haru was born in the Tokio palace, and until his second year lived in the imperial nurseries in the Nakayama Yashiki, a black-walled place facing the castle moats. After that he was transferred to the palace of the Empress Dowager, but he now resides with the Emperor. A new imperial palace has just

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been built in Tokio, and in it there is a large wing or pavilion that contains the apartments of Prince Haru and his suite.

The present Emperor of Japan passed his boyhood, like his ancestors before him, in the seclusion of the old imperial palace in Kioto. When he came to the throne, in 1867, he was only fifteen years of age, and had dreamed and imagined less of the outside world than his little nine-year-old son now actually knows. His early life had been occupied with the study of "the classics" and the routine of the most elaborate etiquette and most long-drawn ceremonial known to any court of the world. There was in his existence none of the activity and excitement that crowd the daily life of a European sovereign or crown prince, and when he left the palace grounds it was in a closely covered palanquin, or cart, and he could go only to some other high-walled palace, temple, or monastery grounds. He wore flowing, large-sleeved garments of the heaviest brocades, that prevented him from doing anything more than walking at a most dignified pace, and a sedate promenade in the palace gardens was as much exercise as he ever took.

At the time the Emperor came to the throne the war between his followers and those of the Shogun, or military ruler, was fast approaching an open conflict, and it ended, as we all know,* in the short campaign of 1869, the overthrow of the Shogun and the restoration of the secluded ruler to actual power. A few battles near Kioto, the siege and destruction of the Osaka castle, were the great incidents of the struggle, and the defeated Shogun escaped in disguise, first to a United States gunboat, and after leaving that refuge was captured by the imperial forces. His life was magnanimously spared; and, stripped of his power, titles, and estates, he now lives as a private gentleman in the small town of Shidzuoka, about one hundred miles south of Tokio.

After his restoration to actual power the Emperor moved his court to Tokio, the old military capital of the Shogun, and greatly changed his manner of living and of conducting the nation's affairs. He adopted for himself European dress as his costume of ceremony, and soon uniformed the army, the police, and civil-officers in the coat and trousers of Western nations. The old nobles were horrified to have their sovereign appear in the Tokio streets in the open day, and to have any one and every one looking upon his sacred countenance, but they have since become used to it.

Compared to his imperial father, even at the present day, Prince Haru is much more emancipated, and none of the old traditions seem to have any weight in regulating his conduct. There was no precedent to follow in the education of a Japanese prince in the modern way, and Prince Haru has made many laws for himself. He is a wonderfully bright and precocious little fellow, and his small, twinkling black eyes are full of mischief and see everything. He is hardly taller than an American boy of six years of age, but he has at times the dignity, the pride of birth, and consciousness of station and power, of a man of sixty. His eyes are not slanting, nor indeed does one often see in a Japanese face the wonderfully oblique eyes beloved of the caricaturists. The peculiarity in the expression of their eyes is given by the eyelids being fastened in either corner, as if a few stitches had been taken there. This makes it impossible for them to lift the eyelids as high as we do, and gives the narrower slits through which they look the peculiar Oriental look. One often sees Japanese with as round, wide-open eyes as those of our race, and it gives an especial beauty to their countenances.

Prince Haru has the exquisitely smooth, fine yellow skin that is one of the points of greatest beauty in Japanese children, and a bright color sometimes shows in the pale yellow of his little cheeks. He has the rank of a colonel in the Japanese army, and wears his military uniform and his cap with the gold star all the time, his clothes being dark-blue cloth in winter and white duck in summer. He is fond of riding, and, when mounted, the miniature colonel trots along at a fine gait, giving and returning the military salute as he passes an officer or a sentry, like a young martinet. Being a prince, as well as a colonel, he has a suite of nobles in attendance upon him,—chamberlain, preceptor, secretary, equerry, and aide-de-camp all going with the establishment of this imperial mite. Many of these nobles are as old as his father, and a few are old enough to be his grandfathers. Even by taking their regular turns at duty, the suite and staff in attendance upon him are kept very busy by the active young princeling. One set escort him to school, stay on duty there and carry the books to and fro, and are relieved by those who attend the small Highness in his hours of ease and play.

While Prince Haru has his separate establishment in the palace, he often dines with the Empress Dowager, or sits in state at the table with the Emperor and Empress. He is as apt in handling the knife, fork, and spoon, as he is with the chopsticks, and comprehends all the etiquette of offering or receiving a "health" with one of the tall champagne glasses, as well as the formalities attending the use of the thin *saké* cups. He is said

* See article entitled "Great Japan: the Sunrise Kingdom," in ST. NICHOLAS for November, 1888.

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to talk to his father as unrestrainedly as to any member of his suite, to politely answer back, contradict and give his own little opinion, as if it were an ordinary father he addressed, instead of Mutsu Hito, Son of Heaven, and one hundred and twenty-first sovereign of the unbroken line of Japan's imperial family. The Emperor is said to greatly delight in the boy's ways, and his chatter about what he sees and does; and to the whole court the Heir Apparent is a wonderful and extraordinary child.

Prince Haru attends the nobles' school in Tokio and has private tutors besides. He is very quick to learn and an ambitious student, a little more assertive and argumentative than the usually timid, docile, gentle little Japanese boys in the classes with him. English is the foreign language that he has decided to learn first, and he already knows many conventional phrases of greeting and social intercourse.

He enters into the tugs-of-war, football, and other school games with the young noblemen who are associated with him, and is as earnest in his play as in everything else.

When he was only seven years old Prince Haru had an unexpected wrestling match with a small American boy of his own age. It was at a school entertainment in Tokio, and it began by Prince Haru's noticing that the young American kept on his Tam o' Shanter cap in the princely presence.

"Go and tell that boy to take off his hat!" ordered the small prince to his aide-de-camp.

Before the officer could reach the offender, the insulted princeling slipped from his chair, strode down, and knocked off the hat with his own hand. Young America never stopped to think who the aggressor was, but struck back, and in a few minutes the future emperor and one of our future presidents had clinched, and were slapping and pounding each other in the most democratic manner. The horrified nobles of the prince's suite and the frightened parents of the young American separated them, and led them apart, neither combatant feeling any regret for what he had done.

"That boy slapped me first, when I was n't doing anything to him!" persisted the young American, whose parents were almost expecting to be arrested or beheaded for the unprecedented treatment of such a sacred being as the Imperial Crown Prince.

"I have punished that boy for his impoliteness in wearing his hat in my presence," said the pompous princeling, frowning at his suite, tightening his little sword-belt and strutting up and down like a young game-cock.

The tableaux and exercises went on quietly after that prelude, and when supper-time came, Prince Haru was seen eating pink and white ice-cream elbow to elbow with his late opponent, and gallantly feeding his own sponge-cake and *éclairs* to the opponent's pretty little yellow-haired sister.

Prince Haru inherits his father's love of horses and horse-racing, and at the spring and autumn races in Tokio is to be seen in the imperial box. When he attends without the Emperor, the Japanese national anthem is played by the military band to announce the arrival of an imperial personage, and he is received with the same honors as his father. The youngster carries a field-glass half as long as his arm, to watch the horses as they circle about the great lotus-lake at the Uyeno park track, and he is the most excited among the spectators when the horses are on the last quarter. He is critical and appreciative, too, at the fencing and wrestling matches, and the Japanese athletic sports and contests that survive from the old feudal days.

The old conservative nobles are not pleased with the idea of this very precocious and modern young prince going about so much and seeing so much of the world. They think him too advanced and too progressive, and consider that he is having his own way too much; but those nobles do not know boys and princes in other countries, and being first of the princes to grow up after the restoration, everything has to be new and experimental in his case. It is proposed, that when he reaches the age of fifteen or sixteen years, he shall go abroad with his tutors. Prince Haru will spend several years on his travels around the world, seeing the other nations of the earth, living for a time in the great capitals, and studying the methods and results of the different forms of government, so that he may have a broad and general knowledge of affairs before he is called upon to become the ruler of Japan.

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